

But please read and give to Jim

Please return to NRP file

Memo on conversation with Warden Moore, Petros, 5/12/72, a.m.

He gave me the May visitor cards, from which I listed the dates of visits by Stoner, Jerry and the few others who saw James. The name of the Chattanooga investigator, now a member of the legislature, is illegible (Samuel D. ???, visit of 4/14/69).

On the date of the first alleged escape attempt, Jerry showed up at the checkpoint at about 2 p.m., before any announcement had been made, Moore says. (My recollection is that it was on the wire before 2, for I was that day at the then-offices of the Nat. Enquirer, in Englewood Cliffs, N.J. It was not long after 2 that Bill Dick and I got back from lunch, and the wire copy was on his desk.) ^{8:30} He also said that it was about the time that the announcement, first announcement, could have been on the radio. "His is to say that ~~he~~ ^{James} could not have driven up after hearing of it in Savannah, and that it is, in warden's opinion, unlikely that he had just gotten there from Savannah. He quotes Jerry as saying what was wrong or as saying he wanted to know what was wrong. And he wonders how Jerry could have known that anything was wrong. This is to say that he suspects there was a plot to escape of which Jerry was part, presumably driver of the getaway car. I, too, would like to know what we can of this. So, I asked him to have an investigation made for that date at the Holiday Inn at Harrison, where Jerry told me he had then always stayed. When he and I stayed at the Quality Courts Hotel on route the airport 11/71, he told me that was the first time he had ever stayed anywhere but the Harrison Holiday, which is more accessible from Savannah than the Knoxville side of Petros. If there is earlier registration for Jerry at the Holiday Inn, I think we know something. If there is no registration, ditto. I find it hard to believe that Jerry would have been so late in the day on coming at the jail, for that is too close to the end of visiting hours. Unless he had just driven up from Savannah. I think the distance makes this unlikely. He says he can take it in a little over four hours from Marietta, but that is the closer end of the possible route.

Moore says he has no doubt that the man who helped Ray on this caper, Ray "Orlock", planned to flee with him. He was in Ray's cell, where he was not assigned. He knows of no connections of "Orlock's."

Second: looked like long-time project, not a plan for immediate escape, and that he had worked on the incomplete hole at least once before. Tools readily available, in the laundry where Jimmy works and by purchase from other prisoners, who steal them. (I did not ask if they had fingerprinted any of these tools and/or the area of the hole, where, unless Jimmy was wearing gloves when observed as the official story has it, crawling when the lights came on in one version and turning a corner in another, he must have left some.)

On Stoner's last trip there, in which he did not sign in (Jerry knew he could get away wit it because when we were there together in November nobody asked us to - I think that henceforth the warden will see to it that there is more care, and this since I did sign in), Stoner gave Moore some of Stoner's campaign literature. He is running for the Georgia Senate. The Warden is still outraged at it. He describes Stoner as worse than Hitler and suspects he may have been part of what he already believes was a conspiracy to kill King.

Once when he didn't like the way Jimmy looked, he saw to it that he had a prompt and complete physical (checked out fine). I am confident that he is truthful saying that he is interested in Jimmy's welfare and safety. And sincere. He also believes he is safer in that jail than outside. This is another way of saying he is satisfied there is a conspiracy and that Jimmy a) did not fire the shot and b) will be killed by the system. He volunteered, then, with some emphasis...he will do whatever he can to help prepare a defense or in the preparation of court papers for any prisoner, including Jimmy, for this purpose, as distinguished from ordinary visits, will admit Jerry. That he took my word that two other prisoners had information I wanted for the defense and produced them seems to confirm this. He asked no questions at all about them, even their names, which I gave him later when I asked to see them. I saw them alone, unless the room was bugged. 15